

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES IN THE ARMENIAN POPULATION OF DIARBEEKIR, 1895-1914

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During the final decades of the Ottoman Empire, the authorities managed the Armenian Question at different levels. In order to reduce the diplomatic and political consequences of the problem and to de-legitimize potential reforms in the provinces on the Armenian Plateau, the regime chose as a key point of attack the physical presence of Armenians. Accelerated after the Congress of Berlin in 1878, this policy entailed concrete decisions aimed at modifying the demographic composition in the eastern provinces. Two figures are revealing in this respect: the official *Salname* of A.H. 1294 (1877-78 A.D.) showing 2 million Armenians in the Ottoman Empire,¹ and the statistics of the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople in 1913-14 showing slightly more than 1,900,000. Although certain historians such as Kemal Karpat and Justin McCarthy contest these figures, the demographic regression of the Armenian element between 1877 and 1914 is beyond question.² It can be assessed

¹ *Projet de règlement organique pour l'Arménie turque* (Constantinople: Aramians, 1878), pp. 18-23; Gustave Rolin-Jaequemyns, *Armenia, the Armenians and the Treaties* (London: John Heywood, 1891), pp. 8-10. Major Ahmed Jevad, later grand vizier of the empire, also gave the figure of 3 million Armenians in 1873: cf. *Malûmat-i el-Kâfiyê fi Memalik-i el-Osmâniye* [Complete Information on the Ottoman Regions] (Istanbul, 1298/1873), p. 85, cited in Arthur Beylerian, *Les grandes puissances, l'Empire ottoman et les Arméniens dans les archives françaises (1914-1918)* (Paris: Presses de la Sorbonne, 1983), p. xxii.

² For an analysis of this issue, see Raymond H. Kévorkian and Paul B. Paboudjian, *Les Arméniens dans l'Empire ottoman à la veille du génocide* (Paris: Editions d'Art et d'Histoire, 1992), pp. 53-56.

at approximately 50 percent when taking into account natural population increases in the course of nearly four decades.

The reasons for the alteration in the demographic composition of the Armenian provinces are numerous, both concrete and artificial. For instance, the Ottoman authorities altered administrative units in order to dilute traditionally Armenian regions by attaching Kurdish-populated or Turkish-populated districts. In 1878, the *vilayet* of Erzerum, which covered approximately the former *eyalet* of Ermenistan, was reorganized into four provinces—Erzerum, Van, Hakkiari, and Mush.³ Later, in 1886, the government divided the Armenian Plateau into smaller administrative entities. Thus, the basin of the Euphrates was partitioned among the new vilayets of Erzerum, Mamuret-ul-Aziz (Kharpert), Diarbekir, and Sivas, neighboring the other eastern provinces of Dersim, Bitlis, Van, and Hakkiari. A final division was undertaken in 1895, on the eve of the great massacres, making these eight vilayets into six new entities: Van, Bitlis, Diarbekir, Mamuret-ul-Aziz, Sivas, and Erzerum. These manipulations compound the difficulty of comparing the censuses undertaken in different periods, aside

³ France, Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, *Documents diplomatiques, 1875-1877* (Paris: Imp. Nationale, 1877), p. 135, Annex I, Seventh Protocol of the Conference of Constantinople, session of January 11, 1877:

In Asia, the great divisions correspond to the territorial extent of the time of the conquest and take, up to the creation of the European provinces, the name of communities that originally resided in them; for example, the *eyalet* of Ermenistan [Armenia] and the *eyalet* of Kurdistan. These appellations existed until the reign of the Sultan Mahmud II, but from this period onward, the policy of the Divan [government] was to delete the name of these great divisions that served as a reminder of the historical importance of the conquered nationalities and at the same time to partition the *eyalets*.

In new editions of seventeenth-century through nineteenth-century Turkish authors, the name "Armenia" has become simply "Eastern Anatolia." In the second edition of seventeenth-century author Kâtip Çelebi, *Hayati ve eserleri hakkında incelemeler* [Contributions on the Life and Works] (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınlarından, 1957), p. 127, the title of chapter 41, "On the Subject of the Country of Armenia," has been altered to "Eastern Anatolia" (cf. the first edition, Constantinople 1732, p. 227). For more details, see Avetis Papazyan, "Kiatip Chelebii 'Jihan-Numan' vorpes aghbyur Hayastani patmakan ashkharhagrutyun" [The 'Jihan-Numa' of Katip Chelebi as a Source for the Historical Geography of Armenia], *Patma-banasirakan handes*, no. 4 (1966): 229-32.

from the approximation and doubtful methods employed by Ottoman officials, as pointed out by Vital Cuinet,⁴ Gustave Rolin-Jaequemyns,⁵ and Abdolonyme Ubicini.⁶ In some cases, the total number of hearths is given; in others, Greeks and Syrians are distinguished from the Armenians, who are listed separately as Apostolic (Orthodox), Catholic, and Protestant, while there is no distinction of Turks from Turkmen (Turkomans), Circassians (Cherkes), and Kurds or from Kizilbashs, Zazas, Yezidis, and other sects. Muslims are presented as a monolithic bloc, in contrast with various Christian denominations. In fact, demography is used for purely political purposes, as the Ottoman government lay statistics before the European powers.

Concerning the vilayet of Diarbekir, excluding the *kazas* (districts) of Severek and Direk, and the whole of the *sanjak* (county) of Mardin, the cited Salname of 1877-78 shows 180,000 Armenians and 138,300 Kurds, Turks, Zazas, and Yezidis in the northern districts.⁷ Censuses published by Kemal Karpat give totally different estimates for the years 1881-82 to 1893: 1,048,143 Armenians for the entire Ottoman Empire, with 56,616 Armenians and 289,591 Muslims in the vilayet of Diarbekir.⁸ The census by the Armenian Patriarchate between 1878 and 1880 shows 150,000 Armenians for the region of Diarbekir,⁹ while Cuinet's figures, compiled up to 1890 from

⁴ Vital Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie*, 4 vols. (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1890-1895), vol. 1, introduction.

⁵ Rolin-Jaequemyns, *Armenia*, pp. 8-10.

⁶ Jean Henri Abdolonyme Ubicini, *Lettres sur la Turquie* (Paris: J. Dumaine, 1853).

⁷ Cf. note 1.

⁸ Kemal Karpat, *Ottoman Population, 1830-1914: Demography and Social Characteristics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), pp. 132-34. Catholics are included in the number of Armenians. See the census of 1906-07, p. 164.

⁹ This census was undertaken, at the request of Patriarch Nerses Varjabedian (Varzhapetian), by Archbishop Garegin Srvandztiants with two assistants and the input of diocesan administrations in 1878-79, although it was not possible for the Armenian census-takers to enter into some districts under the control of hostile Kurds. A part of these statistics is included in the two volumes published by Srvandztiants in his *Toros aghbar* [Brother Theodore] (Constantinople: E.M. Tntesian, 1879-1881), while censuses for Pasen, Derjan, Kemakh, Bayazid,

documents provided by the Ottoman administration and the Salname, show 328,644 Muslims, 79,179 Armenians, and 53,464 other Christians (Syrian, Assyrian, and Greek), together with a few thousand Yezidis, Gypsies, and Jews.¹⁰ After the massacres of 1895-96, which had a real effect on the demographic composition in the eastern provinces, the official count was 329,843 Muslims and 55,610 Armenians, that is a stableness in the Muslim population and a sharp decrease of nearly 30 percent in the Armenian population.¹¹ In 1906-07, according to Kemal Karpat, there were 315,569 Muslims and 55,584 Armenians (Apostolic, Catholic, and Protestant combined).¹² Finally, in 1914, the number of Armenians, according to Karpat's calculations was 73,226,¹³ while the statistics of the Armenian Patriarchate add up to 106,867, which in fact fell short of the actual number.¹⁴ Indeed, during the deportation of Armenians in the summer of 1915, the Young Turk authorities were to discover to their surprise that there were at least 120,000 Armenians in the vilayet.¹⁵

The regime was not content with manipulating figures and employed an extremely pragmatic program to create the desired modifications in the equilibrium of the regional demographics. In a vilayet such as Diarbekir, a traditional contact zone between Armenians and Kurds, the Armenian population was especially concentrated on the left (east) bank of the Tigris

Alashkert, Sper, Kiskim, Erzerum, and their dioceses were published only much later by Emma Gostantyan, "Arevmtyan Hayastani hayabnak vayreri veraberyal G. Srvandztiansi gazmats vijakagrutyunnerits" [Demographic Statistics of G. Srvandztians Relating to the Armenian-Populated Regions of Western Armenia], *Banber Hayastani arkhivneri* 45:2 (1976): 62-93; cf. *Réponse au mémoire de la Sublime Porte* (Constantinople, 1919), p. 43; *Ararat* 9 (1914): 808ff.

¹⁰ Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie*, vol. 4, p. 412. The French Yellow Book, *Documents diplomatiques, 1875-1877*, pp. 1-8, gives similar figures, but cautions: "In general, it is necessary to show some reservation regarding the preceding figures, because statistical information on Asia Minor is, as is known, very defective."

¹¹ Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, p. 160.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 164.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

¹⁴ Cf. Kévorkian and Paboudjian, *Les Arméniens*, p. 59.

¹⁵ T.C. Başbakanlık Arşivi, 9Za 1333/18 Eylül [September] 1915, Reply of the Prefect of Diarbekir Reshid to a circular [received August 12, 1331/1915], doc. no. 112, indicating that 120,000 Armenians had been deported from the vilayet.

but was also found integrated in the expanse to the south, inhabited mainly by Kurdish and Arab populations. Since 1840, the centralization policy directed from Constantinople had singularly weakened the power of tribal Kurdish chieftains who had controlled Diarbekir since the end of the sixteenth century. This permitted the Armenians to attain a degree of autonomy in agricultural pursuits and to own land. The dilemma before the Ottoman authorities, therefore, was to retain a hold on the regions in the eastern provinces while allowing a certain degree of power to the Kurds. The response of Sultan Abdul-Hamid II (1876-1908/09) to this problem was the creation, beginning in 1891, of the Kurdish *Hamidiye* regiments.

The Hamidiye Regiments

The origin of the project to organize a semi-regular Kurdish cavalry remains uncertain. It has been suggested that the sultan or one of his counselors desired to copy the model of the Cossack cavalry in Russia.¹⁶ Abdul-Hamid thus stood to gain the goodwill of the turbulent Kurdish *aghas* or *beys* while creating an instrument for the repression of Armenians, be they revolutionaries or simple farmers. Some historians do not contest that the Hamidiye were intended for harassing and diminishing the Armenian population.¹⁷ The authorities, however, took care to present the criminal acts against civilians—notably the role of the Hamidiye in the massacres of 1894-96—as measures necessitated by the “insurrection” organized by Armenian revolutionaries.¹⁸ It is nevertheless all too obvious that the training of the Hamidiye regiments, as employed by

¹⁶ Maurizio Russo, “La formation des régiments de cavalerie kurde hamidié,” *Revue d'histoire arménienne contemporaine* 1 (1995): 31-44; Stephen Duguid, “The Politics of Unity: Hamidian Policy in Eastern Anatolia,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 9:2 (1973): 139-55.

¹⁷ Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, *Türk İnkılâbı tarihi* [History of the Turkish Revolution], vol. 1, pt. 1, 2d ed. (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1963), p. 67.

¹⁸ French and British diplomatic sources are replete with testimonies of European consuls about the exactions of the Turkish regiments. See, for example, France, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, *Documents diplomatiques. Affaires arméniennes, 1893-1897* (Paris: Imp. Nationale, 1897), and Great Britain, Parliament, *Accounts and Papers* (Blue Book), Turkey no. 1, 1895, and Turkey no. 2, 1896, pts. 1-2.

Abdul-Hamid, was aimed at depopulating the Armenian Plateau in different ways: creating permanent insecurity, plundering villages, stealing or burning crops, tearing up the soil, imposing a repressive "fiscal policy," restricting freedom of movement of goods and persons, kidnaping girls, perpetrating localized massacres, and organizing forced conversions to Islam. Armed by the authorities with modern guns and dressed in uniforms that conferred on them an official aura, the Kurds seized the opportunity that was provided to them to continue the role of pillagers, no longer even trying to conceal the fact that they were charged with the assignment of suppressing the Armenians.

Despoiling the Land

After the constitutional (Young Turk) revolution of July 1908, a special commission selected by the National Assembly of the Armenian Patriarchate proceeded to examine 135 volumes of appeals, deposited from 1890 to 1910, relating to 7,000 cases of spoliation in thirty-two sanjaks in the Armenian east.¹⁹ Synthesized into four published volumes, these documents showed that national goods and private property were indiscriminately despoiled and that the authorities implemented a systematic policy of depriving Armenians of arable land. The local officials collaborated by closing their eyes to the brutalities accompanying these operations or by participating directly in the expropriations by using all sorts of artificial legal devices. Land was not all that was seized but also houses, furniture, shops, and mills; and the state itself did not hesitate to expel Christians from their homes in order to install Circassians or Kurds, in certain cases involving entire villages. Kurdish beys appropriated monasteries to use as their general quarters; arable lands worked by peasants for generations without possession of property titles were recorded in the name of local dignitaries, with peasants being forced to continue to

¹⁹ *Teghegagir hoghayin gravmants handznazhoghovo* [Report of the Commission on Expropriated Land], vol. 1 (Constantinople: Armenian Patriarchate, 1910), p. 3. The commission was created on November 16, 1909.

pay land tax even when they were no longer allowed to farm.²⁰ In fact, the commission counted thirteen different methods of usurpation, confiscation, or spoliation, before declaring that it could see no remedy to the exactions so long as the Ottoman authorities did not apply the rule of law and that no progress whatever had been registered in the struggle against these injustices.

*Massacres and Conversions:
Two Aspects of One Policy*

In the process of the depopulation of the Armenian Plateau by the Ottoman regime, the elimination of populations or their forced conversion to Islam naturally figured in the logical continuation of expropriations. This violent policy, coordinated at the highest level of the state and executed by local officials, was governed by rigorous rules. In a general fashion, it was strongly imparted to the local notables to devise a pretext for all the violence. If the state might organize open military operations in regions with a dense Armenian population, such as Sasun in the summer of 1894, it was preferred to use more discreet methods in regions of mixed habitation, such as Diarbekir. An atmosphere of terror was often created in rural areas by attacking a single village and then inviting surrounding villages to convert to Islam for protection. This process was not new. It was in motion in the kazas of Khoyt and Silvan (Slivan), in the south of Baghesh (Bitlis) as early as 1800, later in the districts of Tortum, Sper, Baberd (Baiburt), and other northern districts of Erzerum in the 1820s. Between 1880 and 1890, Armenian villages were forcibly converted to Islam in the districts of Genj, Chabaghchur, Chehte, Pezar, Sasun, Khizan, Mush, Arabkir, Kharpert, and Diarbekir.²¹ According to the report of the Danish traveler Benigsen, 200 Armenian villages had converted to Islam in the regions of Diarbekir, Kharpert, and Arabkir after the massacres of 1895-96. Their

²⁰ Ibid., vol. 2 (Constantinople: Armenian Patriarchate, 1912).

²¹ See, for example, *Murj* (1895), no. 7, pp. 848-61; *Hnchak* (1897), no. 25; *Droshak* (1896), no. 18, p. 143.

churches were transformed into mosques, and mullahs were installed.²²

According to German missionary Johannes Lepsius, a total of 559 villages and 200,000 Armenians were converted to Islam during the ten months following the massacres of autumn 1895, of which 43 settlements were in the kaza of Palu and 106 in the sanjak of Diarbekir, including the kazas of Silvan, Lije, and Beshiri.²³ Despite these rather precise figures, insufficient attention has been given to the number of converts. It is noteworthy that the new believers were often integrated into Muslim sects such as the Zazas and Kizilbashs or chose, notably in the southern regions, to be integrated into the Kurdish population. This radical Islamization was not, however, due solely to pressure following massacres but was also the result of a long process of acculturation, as well as abductions, physical violence, and perpetual financial pressure exerted on the Armenians.

The methods employed were proven, and the process was conducive to Turkification or Kurdification. After having softened up a population of a given region by massacre, the possibility of people remaining in the villages was eliminated by the destruction of their homes, the pillaging of goods, and especially the removal of farm equipment, beasts of burden, seed, grain, and food reserves. Whereas the men were massacred, the women and girls were taken away, converted, and "placed" in Muslim households or sold in the markets. The survivors had no choice but "to become Turk" (*trkanal*—a popular expression implying conversion to Islam) or to flee their village and seek refuge in the city.

Exile and Emigrations

After its absorption into the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century, Armenia underwent vast currents of emigration and deportation. The Turko-Persian wars fought over domination

²² *Hnchak* (1902), no. 1 p. 5.

²³ Johannes Lepsius, *L'Arménie et l'Europe* (Lausanne: Payot, 1896), pp. 35-36, 204.

of the Armenian Plateau in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries contributed to the modification of the demographic complexion and led to the forced or voluntary dispersion of the Armenian population to the west of Asia Minor and its urban centers. But these movements remained internal, while those of the 1890s were different. With the onset of the repressive Hamidian policies, Armenians began an exodus to the United States, the Caucasus, the Balkans, Egypt, and elsewhere. The number of exiles in some districts reached 10 percent of the total population.²⁴ According to the figures of the Catholicosate of Echmiadzin, 87,760 individuals arrived in Russian Armenia in 1877-78,²⁵ while for its part the Patriarchate of Constantinople estimated the number of Armenians who had emigrated to the Caucasus between 1878 and 1912 to be 150,000 and those who moved to the United States, Egypt, and the Balkans in the same period to be between 150,000 and 200,000.²⁶ Thus, at least 300,000 Armenians left Ottoman or Western Armenia in a little more than three decades.

In an inverse sense, the Russo-Turkish wars of 1828-29, 1853-56, and 1877-78, with the passage of several border districts to the Russian sphere, prompted the emigration of many Circassians and other Muslims from the Caucasus to the Ottoman Empire, where the authorities installed them foremost in the vilayets with Armenian populations, thus contributing to the changes in the former demographic balance.²⁷

The Massacres of 1895

This demographic transformation was accelerated by the massacres of 1895. No less than 223 *takrir* (complaints) were officially addressed to the Sublime Porte through the Armenian Patriarchate from the end of 1894 to the beginning of 1895, so much revealing documentation about ominous preparations

²⁴ Kévorkian and Paboudjian, *Les Arméniens*, ch. 4-D.

²⁵ Élisée Reclus, *Lazistan, Hayastan ev Kurdistan* [Lazistan, Armenia, and Kurdistan] (Echmiadzin: Holy See, 1893), p. 24.

²⁶ *Buzantion*, July 8, 1913, p. 1.

²⁷ Karpát, *Ottoman Population*, pp. 259-60, refers to 240,000 Cherkes (Circassians) established in Eastern Anatolia from 1878 to 1914.

being made in the vilayet of Diarbekir.²⁸ The massacres of Sasun in the summer of 1894 marked the prelude to the even greater turmoil to come. Presented as a revolt of Armenians in Sasun, the violence served to prepare opinion both in Constantinople and in the provinces and also to arouse the Muslim population. Beginning in the spring of 1895, rumors of Armenian rebellion circulated while the Sublime Porte announced changes in the provincial administrative boundaries. Sultan Abdul-Hamid II signed decrees dividing the Armenian Plateau into six vilayets, presenting these changes as the beginning of a local reorganization that would contribute to ensuring the security of life and property. In fact, they were intended to minimize the demographic weight of the Armenian element by attaching zones populated by Kurds and Turks. Officially, these changes were presented as a response to demands for reforms by the European powers and as a means to control the restive Kurdish beys. Nevertheless, from the beginning of the year, there were exactions of all kinds—pillage, kidnaping, and despoiling.

Spreading over the country like a trail of powder, massacres, beginning in Trebizond in October 1895, were carefully organized, with the old proven methods employed. Reports received by the Armenian Patriarchate since the beginning of the year warned that meetings were taking place between the main tribal Kurdish chiefs and the provincial governors, with rumors of imminent massacres.²⁹ Systematically, the massacres from October through December 1895 reached successively the regions of Trebizond, Erzerum, Pasen, Kghi, Erzinjan (Erznka), Gumushkhane, Baiburt, Bitlis, Mush, Sasun, Sghert (Sairt, Siirt), Diarbekir, Mardin, Urfa, Van, Kharpert, Malatia, Arabkir, Agn, Shabin-Karahisar, Sebastia, Gurun, Tokat, Zile, Amasia, Marsovan, Chorum, Caesarea (Kesaria), Samsun, Angora, Birejik, Ova, Marash, Hajin, Payas, Tarsus, Mersine, Adana, Aintab, Missis, Alexandretta, and Antioch. Everywhere the same model was used: preparatory meetings weeks earlier; provocative

²⁸ APC/Bibliothèque Nubar, DOR 4/1, "Rapports des diocèses sur les massacres de 1894-96," doc. no. 16.

²⁹ See *Documents diplomatiques* (note 17 above).

sermons in the mosques; imprisonment or execution of Armenian notables, teachers, and prelates; attacks on businessmen and craftsmen; pillaging and burning of the Armenian quarters or villages; murder of males and rape of girls and women; kidnaping of children and their conversion to Islam; arrest and imprisonment of the surviving males on the charge of insurrection; and so forth. All social classes participated, each in its manner, in these "operations." The high officials coordinated, the mullahs exhorted, the notables spurred followers to action, and the soldiers and gendarmes supervised the proper execution of the operations and signaled the end of the massacres. The local population itself made up most of the "troops," with men killing and women looting. In the villages, far more sheltered from the view of possible foreign witnesses, the Hamidiye units took direct charge of the work of massacre.³⁰

The massacres began in Diarbekir on November 1, 1895, as Kurds flowed into the city from the surrounding countryside and a fire was touched off in the bazaar, where the appetite for booty played its role. Then, in the evening, attacks began on the Armenian quarters.³¹ The well-being of the city was badly compromised by the massacres that lasted three days and three nights. More than 3,000 Armenians, mainly men, fell victim, despite the intervention of missionaries, who sheltered several thousand fugitives in their compounds. Great material damage was also incurred: 1,701 houses and 2,448 shops or workshops were burned. In the rest of the sanjak, some 119 villages were looted and burned, making a total of 200 localities in the vilayet as a whole.³² The same sources show 6,000 persons massacred and 30,000 injured.³³

In all, it has never been possible to determine exactly how many Armenians perished in the 1894-96 massacres or their aftermath. The estimate of the Patriarchate of Constantinople was at least 300,000 deaths, to which the subsequent victims of epidemics and famine must be added.³⁴ However, to measure

³⁰ Emile Antoine, *Les massacres d'Arménie* (Brussels: O. Schepens, 1897).

³¹ Lepsius, *L'Arménie*, pp. 16-17.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 221-22.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 240.

³⁴ APC/Bibliothèque Nubar, CCG 2/2, Circular of the Patriarchate of March 9,

the true depth of the catastrophe sustained by the Armenian population, it must be noted that the Ottoman authorities were not content with the organization of massacres but also put in place an accompanying policy that was relentlessly pursued until 1908. This aspect is often ignored by historians. Peasants were not only deprived of means of existence, with their homes, livestock, farm equipment, and perhaps even their land lost, but they were also cut off from the spiritual help of the church, whose priests were among the first to be killed, and from schools, whose buildings were destroyed, instructors victimized, and infrastructures ruined. It was therefore extremely difficult to begin anew.

The authorities kept the whole of Armenia under a state of emergency. Specifically, Armenians were prohibited from moving between one kaza and another in the same vilayet, leading to a drastic decline of commerce; contact between the provinces of the plateau was cut off by the dismissal of Armenian officials in the local administrations; and fiscal pressure was increased, for example, by forcing survivors to pay the military exemption tax, even for massacred men, exiles, and expatriates. In these conditions, facing the absolute impossibility of meeting the demands of the authorities, the Armenians had to auction their land, often sold for a pittance to the Muslim refugee *muhajir* newcomers or the Kurdish beys, making the permanent departure of the villagers irreversible. The Agricultural Bank, officially meant to support farming, required survivors to repay loans taken out by killed or exiled members of their family.³⁵

This policy can be concretely illustrated in figures from the provinces. At the end of the winter of 1897, eighteen months after the massacres, there were more than 24,000 persons without shelter suffering from hunger in the region of Mush (of whom 5,400 were in Sasun, 9,270 in Chabaghchur, Khoyt, Pezar, and Genj, 3,120 in Maruta, 4,100 in the plain of Mush, and so forth). In the region of Van, 16,000 persons died of

1898, indicating a partial softening of these prohibitions according to a decree of the Sublime Porte of March 2, 1898.

³⁵ Ibid., CCG 2/1, Circular of June 6, 1897.

starvation in the same period, while several thousand residents of Shatakh, Norduz, Moks, Shidan, and Gargar tried to survive at Van and in the monasteries in the vicinity. It was the same in Khnus, Kghi, Baiburt, Erzinjan, Palu, Kharpert, Arabkir, Chunkush, and Diarbekir. At the beginning of 1897, the Patriarchate of Constantinople counted approximately 50,000 Armenian orphan boys and girls, including sold and vanished children who had not been recovered.³⁶

This situation lasted several years. During the winters of 1896-97, 1897-98, 1898-99, and 1899-1900, tens of thousands of Armenians died of starvation and cold, despite international assistance (which was hindered by the authorities) and the massive aid of the patriarchal bodies. If in 1896-97 the famine was general,³⁷ it was far more localized in the following years: at Van, Ului, Bitlis, and Palu in 1898-99; at Van, Bitlis, Mush, Kghi, Divrig, Agn, and Ului in 1899-1900.³⁸

Armenians in the Vilayet of Diarbekir

The vilayet of Diarbekir as it was constituted in 1914 was made up of 16,250 square miles (42,100 square kilometers) and extended to the Euphrates River in the west, the Tigris River in the east, the Armenian Taurus chain in the north, and Mesopotamia in the south. It encompassed a mountainous northern zone, with peaks of nearly 10,000 feet (more than 3,000 meters) in elevation, and a southern zone in the low-lying plain. This divided "judicious" administrative arrangement, with a northern part reaching into the heart of the Armenian Plateau and a southern part touching the deserts of Mesopotamia, was entirely characteristic of the policy of dislocation of national entities practiced by the Ottoman authorities in the second half of the nineteenth century.

In the Middle Ages, the plain of Diarbekir marked the southern limits of the Armenian region of Tsopk (Kharpert).

³⁶ Maghakia Ormanian, *Azgapatum* [National History], vol. 3 (Jerusalem: St. James Press, 1926), col. 5078.

³⁷ APC/Bibliothèque Nubar, CCG 2/1, Circular of April 19, 1897.

³⁸ Ibid., CCG 3/1, Circulars of April 16 and Nov. 5, 1899.

The northern and northeastern parts of the vilayet—the districts of Silvan, Lije, Palu, Chermug (Chermik, Chermak), and Arghana—also entered into the composition of Tsopk, while the kaza of Beshiri, situated on the left bank of the Tigris, was integrated into Aghdznik. The Ottoman conquest in 1514-15 upset the previous demographic and socioeconomic composition, because it imposed a nomadic political system on a largely sedentary society. From the middle of the sixteenth century, the entire province in effect fell under the authority of Kurdish beys, encouraged by the sultans to settle in the region so as to control the Christian populations, especially the Armenians, Syrian Orthodox (Jacobites), and Assyro-Chaldeans (Catholic).

This state of affairs, accentuated by the permanent insecurity in districts controlled by Kurdish tribes, prompted regrouping of the Christian population in urban centers and the progressive disappearance of Armenian villages, notably in the plain. Asserting control in the eastern regions by the central government was particularly difficult in the vilayet of Diarbekir because of the size of the nomadic population. It was only in the 1850s that the central government suppressed the last Kurdish resistance, and the Kurdish principalities of Egil, Palu, Jazire, Hazo, and Genj were finally subjected. The direct administration from Constantinople marked an important step in the process of modernization of the local society and allowed the Christian communities the opportunity gradually to escape from their servile status under the arbitrariness of their Kurdish masters. This process was abruptly interrupted, however, after the Congress of Berlin (1878), and Hamidiye regiments soon replaced Kurdish beys in their role of repression and exploitation of the Christian populations.

The City of Diarbekir

Most of the prestigious edifices of the past had been converted to mosques or barracks. This was notably the case of the Ulu Jami, the former Cathedral of Surb Toros (Saint Theodore), transformed into a mosque in 1518, as well as the churches of Surb Gevorg (Saint George), Surb Errordutiun (Holy Trinity),

and Surb Hovhannes (Saint John), together with the ancient Roman temple. A key city in Mesopotamia renowned for its commercial activity and artisan traditions, Diarbekir at the beginning of the twentieth century was the provincial capital, inhabited by a variety of Muslim and Christian communities. There were no less than six bishoprics and a dozen churches of different rites.

The Armenian community, numbering 14,100 out of about 45,000 inhabitants, was by far the most important and played a significant role in the economic and social life of the city. According to Garegin Srvandztiants, who visited the city in 1878, "all Christian populations speak Armenian." Their representatives would meet at the Armenian archbishopric when there was a common problem and the need to address the local authorities. It was the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople that was, in principle, responsible for defending the interests of the adherents of these different Christian confessions before the Ottoman authorities.

The Armenian prelacy was established in the center of Diarbekir in a large building next to the Cathedral of Surb Kirakos (Giragos), founded in the sixteenth century after the confiscation of the Church of Surb Toros and reconstructed in 1883 after a fire. The prelacy was the headquarters of the diocesan council, which administered community property in the sanjak, its churches, and its scholastic establishments. The second Armenian church, Surb Sargis (Sarkis), possessed equally vast dependencies that were used to house Armenian co-religionists who were passing through town. The community also maintained seven schools attended by 1,100 pupils. Protestant and Catholic missions, for their part, schooled several hundred children of all confessions, among whom were many Armenian youth.

The bazaar of the city, famous throughout the Near East, was the center for Armenian merchants and artisans, who dominated the economic life of the city. They engaged especially in copper works, gold-smithing, silk production, leather, textiles, lace and embroidery, and rug making. To the south of the city, the banks of the Tigris were lined with gardens and orchards, which also covered a good part of the plain of

Diarbekir. In the fair season, the shady cafes along the river were transformed into vast open-air restaurants and welcomed families seeking fresh air. Cultivated there were vineyards, orchards, silkworms, cotton, cereals, and tobacco, whose industrial production was begun by Armenians at the turn of the twentieth century.³⁹

The Sanjak of Diarbekir

Cutting the vilayet in two, the sanjak of Diarbekir spread from the banks of the eastern Euphrates (kaza of Lije) to the approaches to the Syrian desert (kaza of Severeke or Severege). In that area there were 53,590 Armenians in 120 towns and villages, with 48 churches, 5 monasteries, and 71 schools, frequented by 4,305 pupils, as well as several Catholic and Protestant churches and schools.⁴⁰ Eighty percent of the rural communities, as well as those cohabited with Kurds, Kizilbashs, and Syrian and Assyro-Chaldean Christians (also frequently some Turkish officials and soldiers), were concentrated on the slopes of the Taurus Mountain range, in highland zones where self-defense was possible (kazas of Lije, Silvan, and Beshiri).

In 1914, the kaza of Diarbekir had some 25 rural communities situated on the periphery of the provincial capital and populated by 2,252 Armenians living alongside Syrian and Assyro-Chaldean Christians, Kurds, and Kizilbashs.⁴¹

³⁹ APC/Bibliothèque Nubar, DOR 3/2, folio 47; Garegin Srvandzants, *Toros Aghbar*, vol. 2, pp. 230-43; Tadevos Kh. Hakobian et al., *Hayastani ev harakits shrjanneri teghanunneri bararan* [Toponymic Dictionary of Armenia and Adjacent Regions], vol. 2 (Erevan: Erevan State University, 1988), pp. 99-102.

⁴⁰ Ibid.; cf. also A. Safrastyan, "Kostandnupolsi Hayots Patriarkarani koghmits Turkiayi ardaradatutyan ev davanankneri ministrutyan nerkayatsvats haykakan ekeghetsineri ev vankeri tsutsaknere u takrirnere, 1912-13 [Lists and Takrirs of Armenian Churches and Monasteries Presented by the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople to Turkey's Ministry of Justice and Cults," *Echmiadzin* 10 (1965): 46-48; Karpas, *Ottoman Population*, p. 176, counts 41,617 Armenians in the sanjak.

⁴¹ APC/Bibliothèque Nubar, DOR 3/2, f. 47; Safrastyan, "Kostandnupolsi Hayots," p. 46; Srvandzants, *Toros Aghbar*, vol. 2, pp. 231-32.

Locality	Churches	Armenians in 1880 (Village Hearths)	Armenians in 1914 (Inhabitants)
Diarbekir	Surb Kirakos		
	Surb Sargis		14,000
Kiterbel/			
Gheterpel	Surb Hakob	20	—
Yerinjil/Yerenjil		20	—
Tavalu/Tilalu		8	—
Utshkuyu/			
Ansha-Kiugh		6	—
Zermanik/Zemi-			
Aghig/Yeghig	Surb Eghia	35	—
Sharapi/Sherab		8	—
Tarakli/Tare-Kol		9	—
Kara-Bakh	Surb Simon	8	—
Tilkhas/Telkhas		2	—
Baghchajig/			
Baghchajak	Surb Daniel	8	—
Arzoghlu		?	—
Zorava		4	—
Satu-Koy/			
Sati-Koy	Surb Tukhmanuk	82	—
Kaba-Sakal		8	—
Kiabi-/Kapig/			
Tahib	Surb Kristapor	7	—
Selimi/Selemi		2	—
Kara-Kilisa	a church	6	—
Chakanian/			
Chako		10	—
Jevri/Jernig	Surb Astvatsatsin	32	—
Ali-Punar	Surb Astvatsamayr	15	—
Villages not located:			
Kadian varin		6	—
Kadian verin		12	—
Sheghsor		6	—
Khemeri		2	—
Sharakhchi		6	—
TOTAL		322	2,252 (rural)
		(2,576 inhabitants)	
GRAND TOTAL			16,252

*Localities Inhabited by Armenians
in the Kazas of Severeke, Veran-Sheir, and Direk*⁴²

Known in the Middle Ages by the Armenian name of Sevaverak or Severak (black ruins), Severeke had in 1914 some 5,450 Armenians who maintained the medieval Cathedral of Surb Toros and three Apostolic educational establishments (250 pupils), as well as three Catholic schools, and one Evangelical school (130 pupils). Situated in a plain watered by the nearby Euphrates on the road connecting Diarbekir with Urfa, the city lived essentially off the transit of caravans and, from the late nineteenth century, was linked to a railway station on the Berlin to Baghdad line. Agricultural endeavors, notably vineyards, nevertheless remained fundamental. Wines from Severeke were known throughout the empire. The remaining 3,825 Armenians of the kaza were established in villages of the plain.

Locality	Churches	Armenians in 1880	Armenians in 1914
Severeke	Surb Toros	3,750	5,450
Chakagh/Chatak	Surb Toros	?	—
Karabaghche	Surb Simon	?	—
Mezre/Meghre	Surb Gevorg	?	—
Simakhi/Simag	Surb Grigor	?	—
Kharbi/Khibik	Surb Mesrop	?	—
Gori/Golli	Surb Sahak	?	—
Oshin	Surb Stepan	?	—
Total of villagers			3,825
GRAND TOTAL			9,275

Lying in the southern part of the sanjak, the kaza of Direk or Derik had 1,782 Armenians (356 houses), of whom 1,250 lived in the town, at the center of which was the beautiful medieval Church of Surb Gevorg and its school with 50 pupils.

⁴² APC/Bibliothèque Nubar, DOR 3/2, f. 47; Safrastyan, "Kostandnupolsi Hayots," pp. 46, 48; Srvandztiants, *Toros Aghbar*, vol. 2, pp. 232-33; Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie*, vol. 4, pp. 465-69. See also Karpas, *Ottoman Population*, p. 176, for the Ottoman census.

Locality	Churches	Hearths	Inhabitants
Direk/Derik	Surb Gevorg	60	1,250
Beyrog/Bayruk	Surb Daniel vank	5	532
Veran-Shehir	Surb Astvatsatsin	?	1,339

*Localities Inhabited by Armenians
in the Kaza of Beshiri or Chernig*

In 1915, this mountainous kaza sheltered small rural communities making their livelihood from vineyards and fruit trees.⁴³ Submerged since the end of the fifteenth century under the dominance of Kurdish nomads, the Armenian population of the kaza had gradually become Kurdophone, and in the wake of continuous violence a part of them converted to Islam in around 1800. In 1914, there were 5,038 Armenians in 40 villages with 15 churches, situated between the two branches of the Tigris, the Batman Su to the west and the Zok to the east, marking the kaza's southern limits. Only three of these rural communities, Deir-Hamza, Marvan, and Zarikura, were built on the southern slope of the Ashita-Dagh chain, extending along the Tigris.

Locality	Churches	Hearths in 1880	Inhabitants in 1914
Elmadin/ Elmedi	Surb Astsvatsatsin	22	1,339
Zorkan/Gojan	Surb Nshan	50	—
Sinan	a church	50	—
Giresira/ Kre-Siran	Surb Errordutian	7	—
Sheikh-Choban		1	—
Jander/Ghantar	Surb Gevorg	30	—
Eulaha/Elun/Eleh	Surb Astvatsatsin	15	—
Bladur/Bledar/ Pletar	a church	50	—
Zerjili/Cherchel	Surb Kirakos	32	—

⁴³ APC/Bibliothèque Nubar, DOR 3/2, f. 47; Safrastyan, "Kostandnupolsi Hayots," pp. 46-47; Srvandztiants, *Toros Aghbar*, vol. 2, pp. 232-34. Karpas, *Ottoman Population*, p. 176, gives 3,427 Armenians in the kaza of Beshiri.

Jenasgir/ Jenazgar		10	—
Azik-Varin (Ashaghi)	Surb Hakob	12	—
Azig-Verin (Yukari)		5	—
Geduk-Koy/ Gondek	Surb Tovmas	8	—
Kefrzo/Kaferzo		18	—
Barusli/Baresel/ Barisil		15	—
Deir-Hamza/ Be-Khamse		8	—
Marvan/ Merevan	a church	20	—
Zarikura/ Zikarlu	Surb Gevorg	30	—
Ghundajano/ Kontechano	Surb Prkich	105	—
Terego-Amo/ Tell-Merch	Surb Gevorg	11	—
Bassorig/ Pa-Hazrig	Surb Poghos	40	—
Kredi-Kertig	Surb Karapet	60	—
Korig/ Gorik	Surb Hakob	11	—
Meghravash/ Mirza Beg	a church	20	—
TOTAL		5,038 inhabitants	
Villages not located:			
Sharaterik		8	—
Ashek		6	—
Telzok		5	—
Pala		8	—
Bazbut		6	—
Shems		5	—
Amso		10	—
Reshig Mola Omer		2	—
Pe-Khams		5	—
Khachtsi Kiugh		15	—
Sulan		3	—

*Localities Inhabited by Armenians
in the Kaza of Silvan*⁴⁴

The center of the kaza of Silvan/Slivan was Mayyafariqin⁴⁵ (Armenian: Nprkert/Nprgerd of antiquity and the Middle Ages; Byzantine: Martyropolis), situated 16 miles (25 kilometers) to the north of the Tigris, in the Taurus chain of Mount Antok. The kaza was delimited in the south by the Tigris, in the east by the Batman Su, in the west by the districts of Arghana and Diarbekir, and in the north by the kaza of Lije. Mayyafariqin had some importance because of its exceptional geographical situation, one of the principal routes connecting Armenia to Mesopotamia passed through there. It had, however, ceased to play a political role since the thirteenth century and remained limited to the status of a new commercial center, drawing in agricultural goods from the surrounding mountainous villages. In the hands of tribal Kurdish chiefs, the district came under the control of Constantinople between 1835 and 1838.⁴⁶

In 1914, the kaza had 13,824 Armenians, 2,333 Syrian Orthodox, and 26,000 Kurds. The Armenians were settled in 70 villages and had 28 churches, 2 monasteries, and 35 schools attended by 1,600 pupils.

Locality	Churches	Armenians in 1880 Hearths	Armenians in 1914 Inhabitants
Mayyafariqin	Surb Stepan Surb Sargis	80	4,200
Rasho/ Ghendi-Desho		7	—

⁴⁴ APC/Bibliothèque Nubar, DOR 3/2, f. 47; Safrastyan, "Kostandnupolsi Hayots," pp. 46-47; Srvandztians, *Toros aghbar*, vol. 2, pp. 234-36. Karpas, *Ottoman Population*, p. 176, gives the figure of 13,083 Armenians in this kaza.

⁴⁵ *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 5 (Leiden: Brill, 1927), pp. 157-61, s.v. "Maiyafarikin," Vladimir Minorsky.

⁴⁶ APC/Bibliothèque Nubar, DOR 3/2, f. 47; Safrastyan, "Kostandnupolsi Hayots," p. 48; Srvandztians, *Toros Aghbar*, vol. 2, pp. 237-38; Sukias Eprikian, *Bnashkharik bararan* [Dictionary of Toponymy], vol. 2 (Venice: Mekhitarist Press, 1903), pp. 106-07. Karpas, *Ottoman Population*, p. 176, counts 4,659 Armenians in the kaza of Lije.

Tirbesibi/				
Terbe-Sebi	Surb Gevorg	60	—	
Korik/Koritiq		5	—	
Sherfikan/				
Sharafiga		3	—	
Kavehan/				
Gavchan		4	—	
Firan/				
Fera/Frun	Surb Gevorg	80	—	
Salinkan/				
Salega	Surb Tovmas	25	—	
Hadji-Jan/				
Hajija	Surb Gevorg	50	—	
Derveshi/				
Dervish-Peylivan		3	—	
Zari/Zore		4	—	
Purishan/Perushan		4	—	
Kebmiad/Keniad/				
Ginniat	Surb Astvatsatsin	60	—	
Hassin-Agha/				
Huseyna	Surb Astvatsatsin	70	—	
Mir-Ulian/				
Mer-Elias	Surb Gevorg	30	—	
Kurukh/				
Kuresh	Surb Gevorg	15	—	
Makan/Mayan/				
Mahrán	Surb Sargis	6	—	
Ekirak/Akrag	Surb Hakob	45	—	
Sheikhan/				
Shekhan		6	—	
Terjil/Terjil	Surb Tovmas vank	5	—	
Hazro	Surb Astvatsatsin; Surb Shmavon	176	—	
Tahtán/Dadash		2	—	
Ain-Berik/				
Aynaprig	Surb Astvatsatsin	2	—	
Mirek/				
Koule-Miran	Surb Nshan	11	—	
Dersil/Dersel	Surb Gevorg	21	—	
Bachinik/				
Bachnegh		3	—	
Aslu/Aslo	Surb Daniel	38	—	
Pirma/Piraman		6	—	

Cheruk/Cherek	Surb Sargis	20	—
Izdin/Azdi		3	—
Bashi-Boyuk	Surb Astvatsatsin	15	—
Kort/Gurte/ Ghurtu	Surb Sargis	10	—
Ziri/Zera/Chera		25	—
Kilis/Klesa		10	—
Hacher/Adeshé	Surb Sargis	30	—
Pir-Halu/ Pireghalan		7	—
Bil-Bil/Bel-Bel		14	—
Zinzin/Zenzen	Surb Daniel	40	—
Bakus/Ba-Khus		3	—
Bushat/Boshat		20	—
Firkhend/ Farhandi		8	—
Mezra/Mezre	Surb Hakob	21	—
Sultan/ Saltan/Haltan	Surb Sargis	14	—
Tirkevank/ Derge-Van	Surb Daniel vank	2	—
Bashmut/ Ba-Shement		5	—
Haji-Cherkes		3	—
Bahjan/Bakhkha	Surb Astvatsatsin	30	—
Derek/Takheg		1	—
Deirun/Derun		10	—
Dasina/Dasena		2	—
Helen/Helin	Surb Gevorg	70	—
Shemket/Shevkat		15	—
Haknaf	Surb Hovhannes	?	—
Payik	Surb Toros	?	—
Total		9,624	
GRAND TOTAL		13,824	

Villages not located:

Khoshava	5	—
Ali-Penki	3	—
Pa-Maidan	4	—
Chatal	10	—
Kelaj	5	—
Male-Melko	2	—
Kontelal	2	—

Padegane-kele		5	—
Telmin		2	—
Vej-Segan		2	—
Omera		2	—
Guzal-Ghara		15	—
Alotina		5	—
Rasul-Ain		12	—
Kuverjin		30	—
Pashnegh	a church	70	—
Khejigan		10	—
Hayderigan		10	—
Koman		2	—

*Localities Inhabited by Armenians
in the Kaza of Lije*

Situated in the northern part of the sanjak of Diarbekir, within the ancient Armenian province of Mets Tsopk, and to the northeast, in a small part of historic Aghdznik, the kaza of Lije was entirely characteristic of these Taurus regions, mountains dotted with small villages and deep valleys. In 1914, there were 5,980 Armenians, distributed among 33 villages, with 24 churches and 1 monastery.

Locality	Churches	Armenians in 1880 Hearths	Armenians in 1914 Inhabitants
Lije/Lija	Surb Astvatsatsin	200	2,650
Foum/Opum	Surb Kirakos	90	—
Sarnis	Surb Tovmas; Surb Sargis; Surb Hakob; Surb Toros; Surb Shmavon (only 1 in 1914)	17	—
Shikakan/Shegaga		1	—
Herak		1	—
Kervas/Garvas/			
Garas	Surb Sargis	30	—
Aintak/			
Antag/Antagh	Surb Stepan	7	—
Shatik	Surb Sargis	10	—

Yamutni/ Palinjne	Surb Khach	10	—
Shem-Shan/ Sham-Sham	Surb Hovhannes	44	—
Helhel/Hal-Hal	Surb Gevorg	8	—
Ninias/Nunias	a church	7	—
Hazan/Hezan		1	—
Zara		5	—
Zermanik/ Jumayig	Surb Nshan	11	—
Dibene/Debne	Surb Petros-Poghos	60	—
Jomelik/Jome		10	—
Haini	Surb Astvatsatsin	295	—
Birbas/Bar-Besh		3	—
Mizak/Mrza	Surb Kirakos	30	—
Peshar/Bechar	Surb Astvatsatsin	12	—
Riz	Three churches in ruins	60	—
Nurshin/Norshen		30	—
Herkin/Herki		1	—
Andu	Surb Hripsime	8	—
TOTAL		5,980	
Villages not located:			
Malakhdan		20	—
Harpakhna		45	—
Hezmas		1	—
Pa-Metin		2	—
Sarda		6	—
Koyman		40	—
Kherchin		3	—
Morentar		8	—
Eghmug		4	—
Talanig		2	—

Sanjak of Arghana-Maden

Encompassing the entire northwestern part of the vilayet, the sanjak of Arghana-Maden (Ergani) had historically been a part of the province of Mets Tsopk or Fourth Armenia, which was composed of four cantons: Baghnadun (Paghnatun) to the south (around Arghana), Palu-hovit/Balahovit (valley of Palu) to the

north, Arghtun to the east (around Egil/Ankegh),⁴⁷ and Tsovk to the west (around Lake Goljuk).⁴⁸ This mountainous region in the Armenian Taurus chain, where the Tigris has its source,

⁴⁷ This site has a rich history and deserves a more detailed examination. In the famous stronghold Angkh/Ingila/Artakakert, the current Egil, there reigned Armenian princes of the canton of Angeghtun, descendants of kings of Tsopk/Sophene, who established their capital in Angkh (Anggh) in 160 B.C. It is in this city that the main temple of the god Tork, one of the most venerated of the Armenian pantheon, was located, as well as the mausoleum of the kings. After the union of the kingdom of Tsopk with the crown of Armenia, then under the Artashesian/Artaxiad dynasty, Angkh maintained a major role in the defensive structure of southwest Armenia. Strabo and Pavstos Buzand or the *Buzandaran* emphasize its extraordinary geographical position on a rocky crag at the junction of the western Tigris where the citadel was built. In 1914, there remained scarcely 800 Armenians and an equal number of Turks and Kurds. See *Teghanunneri bararan*, vol. 1, p. 255.

⁴⁸ Tsovk, although less prestigious than Angegh, had special religious significance. In the area around a lake called Tsovk/Goljuk, also the name of the canton, there were numerous monasteries constituting something of a small Armenian Mount Athos. Picturesque and beautiful, this mountain lake, situated 6,230 feet (1,900 meters) above sea level, midway between Kharpert and Arghana in the heart of the Taurus Mountains, overlooked the plain of Kharpert to the north and Antsud/Andzit to the south. At the time of its splendor, Tsovk sheltered a significant population and a bishopric situated at the Monastery of Arkelan. Armenian lords prevailed in the principality of Tsovk until the middle of the eleventh century, when the Seljuk invasions befell them. On the north shore of the lake, the strongholds of Haytarents and Gaban testified to the military importance of the region and the density of its Armenian population. Horses raised there were renowned throughout the Near East. The progressive elevation of the water level in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries expanded the surface of the lake fourfold and finally inundated the ancient city of Tsovk, whose submerged ruins are found in the waters in the southwest part of the lake. The rising of the waters also eliminated the major agricultural area to the south. The phenomenon was aggravated by the natural obstruction of the outlet by which the overflow engulfed the valley of Arghana, where the source of the Tigris rises. Consequently, the town was rebuilt on the height south of the lake. In 1836, the level of the lake stabilized thanks to a natural breach that allowed the water to flow to Arghana-Maden. Only the Monastery of Surb Nshan (Holy Sign) remained above water on a small islet about 350 feet (100 meters) from the shore. It became a place of pilgrimage and remained so until 1915. For the Feast of the Assumption, 5,000 to 6,000 people gathered there each year. In 1895 the threatened population of Tsovk fled to the island for a month to escape the massacres that engulfed the Armenian Plateau. In 1915 residents of Tsovk/Goljuk would remain the lone witnesses to the disappearance of the Armenians of this canton. All the Christian inhabitants were constrained to convert or face exile. Some of the approximately 300 medieval manuscripts preserved in the monastery were hastily buried by residents of the village preparing to go to their death, while others were burned. See Kiureghh Khrayan, *Tsovk-Geuljuk* (Marseilles: Arara, 1927), pp. 5-62.

was delimited to the north by the Perri Su or Kghi Su and to the southwest by the Euphrates. In 1914, there were still 38,460 Armenians, established in 50 towns and villages, with 53 churches, 5 monasteries, and 38 schools with 3,650 pupils.

The canton of Baghnadun has long been considered as one of the keys to the Armenian Taurus, with its strong center at Arhni/Arzni/Arghana, which gave its name to Arghana-Maden, founded much later.⁴⁹ This early medieval city was already known as such by the classical historian Eghishe and was reputed for its impregnable citadel to which was attached the Monastery of Bardzrahayiats Surb Astvatsatsin (Upper Vista, Holy Mother of God, completed in 1433), both situated on a rocky peak dominating the valley on the Kharpert-Diarbekir route. In the beginning of the twentieth century, the town of Arghana, built on a hillside below the citadel, had 7,150 inhabitants, of whom 3,100 were Armenian, with the churches of Surb Sargis (Saint Sergius) and Surb Prkich (Holy Savior). With walnut trees, orchards, and vineyards, it was noted for agriculture, but equally for cotton, animal breeding, and the traditional exploitation of copper and gold mines in the vicinity.

The new city of Arghana-Maden was 1,300 meters (4,265 feet) in elevation, on the right bank of the Arghana-Maden River, the name given to the upper course of the Tigris. Its source was 6 miles (10 kilometers) to the north on a wooded plateau skirting the surrounding villages in the Taurus Mountains. Armenian peasant refugees, notably from old Arghana, founded the town toward the end of the seventeenth century. They developed more systematic exploitation of its copper mines and the fertile farmland. In 1914, there were 3,300 Armenians in the city, with the Surb Astvatsatsin (Holy Mother of God) and Surb Sargis churches, as well as two schools. Armenians inhabited the following places in the kaza of Arghana-Madan.

⁴⁹ APC/Bibliothèque Nubar, DOR 3/2, f. 47; Safrastyan, "Kostandnupolsi Hayots," pp. 37-38n40; Teodik, *Goghgota hay hogevorakanutian ev ir hotin 1915 aghetali tarin* [Calvary of the Armenian Clergy and Its Flock in the Calamitous Year 1915], ed. Ara Kalayjian (New York: St. Vartan Press, 1985), pp. 280-81; *Teghanunneri bararan*, vol. 1, pp. 456, 458-60, 629.

Locality	Churches	Armenians in 1880 Hearths	Armenians in 1914 Inhabitants
Arhni/Arzni/ Arghana	Surb Sargis; Surb Prkich	252	3,100
Arghana-Maden	Surb Astvatsatsin; Surb Sargis	165	3,300
Topelan/Hopig Goljuk/ Dzovk	Surb Gevorg Surb Nshan and a monastery	15	—
Pirrus-Khan		?	—
Payam/Payanle	Surb Karapet Nakhavka	30	—
Egil/Angkh	Surb Tagavor; Surb Nshan Vank	200	800
Aypega/Hredan	Surb Astvatsatsin	42	—
Tell-Baghdad	Surb Hakob	45	—
Piran	Surb Sargis	40	—
Gaplan	Surb Karapet	?	—
TOTAL		4,159 inhabitants	

*Localities Inhabited by Armenians
in the Kaza of Palu*

The Kaza of Palu, lying in the northern sector of the province and more closely associated with Kharpert than with Diarbekir, in 1914 numbered 15,753 Armenians in more than 40 towns and villages, with 38 churches, 2 monasteries, and 26 schools attended by 2,050 pupils.⁵⁰ A compilation of the number of homes and inhabitants in Palu and its villages in 1880 and in 1914 is given in the following chart.

⁵⁰ APC/Bibliothèque Nubar, DOR 3/2, folios 47 and 59; Safrastyan, "Kostand-nupolsi Hayots," p. 37; *Teghanunneri bararan*, vol. 1, pp. 560-61; Mesrob Krayian, *Palu* (Antelias: Catholicosate of Cilicia Press, 1965); Tigran Papazian, *Patmutiun Palu-Havav giughi* [History of the Village of Havav of Palu] (Beirut: Mshak Press, 1960); Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, p. 176, gives only 8,390 Armenians in the kaza of Palu.

Locality	Churches	Armenians in 1880 Hearths	Armenians in 1914 Inhabitants (and Homes)
Palu	Surb Sahak Partev; Surb Kirakos; Surb Sargis; and two monasteries	550	5,250
Chairi-Mezre	Surb Grigor	15	126 (13)
Nbshi/Nmshin	Surb Karapet	20	287 (36)
Nrkhi/Nrkhin	Surb Astvatsatsin	28	440 (62)
Khoshmat	Surb Astvatsatsin	82	853 (114)
Demirji		2	130 (17)
Baghin/Barena	Surb Sargis		617 (102)
Okhi/Okhu	Surb Kirakos	27	250 (25)
Tepe-Koy/Tapa	Surb Minas	40	337 (61)
Havav	Surb Astvatsatsin; Surb Katoghike; Surb Astvatsamayr	160	1,648 (207)
Abrank	Surb Astvatsatsin	20	133 (23)
Shnaz	Surb Hakob	45	374 (54)
Sakrat/Sekerat	Surb Toros	55	98 (21)
Saghman	Surb Khach	35	372 (51)
Tset	Surb Toros	70	454 (87)
Nor Kiugh	a church	38	98 (21)
Tavtig/ Tavti-Mezre	Surb Kirakos	24	98 (10)
Khajar/Kasir		15	56 (7)
Kengerli/ Kervakoy	Surb Tovmas	20	169 (28)
Avlavi/Avlaghi			130 (19)
Basharat/Besharat		10	104 (12)
Hazar-Kom/ Halal Kom	Surb Sargis		48 (8)
Havak/ Kharagelig	Surb Khach	12	94 (12)
Uzun-Ova	Surb Astvatsatsin		178 (25)
Uzun-Ova- Mezre	Surb Sargis		95 (6)
Gulishgerd/ Gulushger	a church	20	143 (27)

Armujan/ Yaremja	a church	47	296 (30)
Kharaba/ Kharabark	Surb Astvatsatsin Ruins of Arsamosata	23	195 (21)
Kurdikh/ Kurdikhan	Surb Khach	4	51 (6)
Trkhe/Terki	Surb Sargis	44	167 (32)
Najaran/ Khalikran	Surb Minas	15	187 (25)
Til	Surb Karapet	25	155 (24)
Serin	Surb Astvatsatsin	17	296 (32)
Artekhan	Surb Minas	31	274 (33)
Khamishli	Surb Sargis	11	82 (9)
Isabeg	Surb Gevorg	30	209 (25)
Kumpat/ Kumpet	Surb Astvatsatsin	20	196 (32)
Mrchomi-Mezre	Surb Gevorg	27	180 (20)
Norshinag		5	—
Tavashi		15	—
Ghampar Sheikh		3	—
Dilimili/Tilimili		4	—
Grbo/Grpo/ Gerpotsig		8	—
Kharakhaya		1	—
Demirji		2	—
Khachari Mezre		2	—

*Localities Inhabited by Armenians
in the Kaza of Chermuk/Chermik*

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Armenian presence in the kaza of Chermuk or Chermik (Armenian: hot spring) was limited to two main centers. Chermuk, the district center, had 1,948 Armenians in 1895, and the town of Chunkush had 10,200 Armenians out of 12,650 inhabitants.⁵¹ The

⁵¹ Garnik Gevorgian [Karnig Kevorkian], *Chnkushapatum* [History of Chunkush], vol. 1 (Drexel Hill, PA: Groong, 1970), pp. 60-86; Teodik, *Goghgota hay*

major activity of Chermuk was viticulture and the production of excellent wines exported to Constantinople. Chermuk was one of the Armenian strongholds in the region up to the eleventh century, as attested by the ruins of the medieval citadel that were still visible in 1900. Until 1884, the town was administratively attached to the vilayet of Kharpert, after which it passed to the jurisdiction of the vilayet of Diarbekir.

Kurds and Turks settled there at the end of the sixteenth century, but they never succeeded in submerging its Armenian population, primarily because of the geographical location of Chunkush as a mountainous isle on the flanks of Mount Salvaz (Spitak). Beside a stream passing through the lower part of the city, Chunkush profited from its proximity to the Euphrates, a bit more than a kilometer to the west. Up to the 1895 massacres, the town boasted an episcopal seat established in the Monastery of Sirahayiats (Beautiful View) a short distance to the east on a height dominating the valley. The provincial public edifices of Chunkush were the Cathedral of Surb Karapet (Surb Garabed; Holy Precursor) and the Mesropian and Sahakian schools, the Armenian Catholic church, completed in 1906, as well as the Armenian Protestant school near the bazaar situated in the heart of the city. Not very conducive for working the soil, the town lived primarily on trade and craftsmanship, notably the tannery and related works, which accounted for 70 percent of the economic activity. Only the 280 Armenians of the village of Adish (with Surb Karapet church) truly practiced agriculture.

Sanjak of Mardin

Although situated in the Syrian-Chaldean sphere of northern Mesopotamia, the sanjak of Mardin had an Armenian population of 13,967, with 68,210 Assyro-Chaldeans and 359,869 Kurds. The 7,692 Armenians in the kaza of Mardin were almost all

hoge vorakanutian, p. 275. Karpap, *Ottoman Population*, p. 176, gives 821 Armenians in the kaza.

settled in the county capital, where they lived with 12,609 Jacobite and Catholic Syrians and some hundreds of Kurds and Zazas.⁵² The Catholic Armenians had the Surb Hovsep (Saint Joseph) and Surb Gevorg (Saint George) churches. To the south, the village of Tell-Armen/Tel-Ermen also had a Catholic Armenian population.

In the kaza of Nisibin, there were barely 90 Armenians, all established in the district center, maintaining one church.⁵³ In the kaza of Jazire, besides 2,716 almost entirely Catholic Armenians established in the district center and surrounding villages, there were 1,565 Armenian nomads living under tents who were more or less Kurdified, although of Christian religion. The main villages of the kaza were Arnabat, 8 houses; Mezer, 5; Gundek-Sheikh, 3; Teldar, 3; Perek, 6; Berebt, 9; Jerahi, 4; Khntuk, 3; Jeder, 3; Zakho, 6; and Sev Chader/Keocher, 45. The 1,452 Armenians of the kaza of Midiat were concentrated in the district center. It was the same at Savur, where there were 1,032 Armenians, almost all Catholic.

The statistical tables show that several dozen Armenian-populated villages disappeared between 1878 and 1914. It is highly probable that this transformation was the result of the methods of depopulation advanced under the regime of Abdul-Hamid and continued under the Young Turk regime.

⁵² APC/Bibliothèque Nubar, DOR 3/2, f. 47; Teodik, *Goghgota hay hovevorakanutian*, pp. 275-78. Karpas, *Ottoman Population*, p. 176, shows 7,895 Armenians in the kaza.

⁵³ APC/Bibliothèque Nubar, DOR 3/2, f. 47; Teodik, *Goghgota hay hovevorakanutian*, p. 279.

TABLE: Summary of the Armenians in the *Vilayet* of Diarbekir in 1914
(*Sanjaks* by *Kaza*)

	Localities	Armenians	Churches	Monasteries	Schools	Pupils	Emigrants
Sanjak of Diarbekir							
Diarbekir	25	16,352	10	1	11	1,300	5,000
Severek	8	9,275	8	-	3	250	
Direk	3	1,782	2	1	1	50	
Beshiri/Chernig	40	5,038	15	-	14	700	
Silvan/Slivan	70	13,824	28	2	35	1,600	
Lije/Lija	33	5,980	24	1	5	305	
Veran-Shehir	1	1,339	1	-	2	100	
Sanjak of Arghana-Maden							
Arghana-Maden	11	10,559	10	2	7	700	
Palu	37	15,753	38	2	26	2,050	
Chermuk	3	12,418	5	1	5	900	
Sanjak of Mardin							
Mardin	2	7,692	3	-	4	800	
Nisibin	1	90	1	-	-	-	
Jezire	12	4,281	1	-	5	500	
Midiat	1	1,452	1	-	2	210	
Savur/Saour	1	1,032	1		2	195	
TOTAL	249	106,867	148	10	122	9,660	5,000

Table: Armenian Households in Villages of Palu District
Compiled by George Aghjayan

Sources identified on page xii as follows: A = Kevorkian; B = Teodik; C = Sargisian; D = Tsakhsurian; E = Tashjian; F = Krayian; G = Papazian

Village Name	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1 Abrank	23	23	25	25	25	20	20
2 Ak Punar	N/A	3	N/A	2	N/A	N/A	N/A
3 Armujan	30	30	55	55-60	55	47	47
4 Artukhan	33	33	40	40	40	31	37
5 Ashun Kiugh	N/A	6	N/A	5-10	N/A	N/A	10
6 Avlavi/Avlaghi	19	5	N/A	15	N/A	15	15
7 Baghin	102	102	120	150-200	150	170	70
8 Basharat	12	N/A	15	15-20	N/A	10	10
9 Chairi Mezre	13	13	N/A	13-15	15	15	15
10 Demurji	17	N/A	2	2	N/A	2	2
11 Deveji	N/A	4	15	15	15	15	15
12 Dilimili	N/A	4	4	4-5	N/A	4	4
13 Ghamber Sheikh	N/A	4	3	3-4	N/A	3	3
14 Grbo	N/A	6	8	8-10	N/A	8	8
15 Gulishger	27	27	35	35-40	40	20	20
16 Gulishger Mezre	N/A	10	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
17 Halalkom/Hazarko	8	8	20	25	25	20	20
18 Havav	207	207	210	210-225	200	160	180
19 Isabeg	25	25	35	35	35	30	30
20 Kengerli	28	28	30	30	30	20	20
21 Khajar	7	7	20	32-43	35	15	15
22 Khamishli	9	9	15	15	N/A	11	11
23 Kharabork/Kharaba	21	21	25	25	25	23	23
24 Kharagelig	12	12	20	20	20	12	12
25 Kharakhaya	N/A	N/A	1	2	N/A	4	4
26 Khoshmat	114	114	90	90-100	90	82	170
27 Kumbat	32	32	25	25-30	25	20	20
28 Kurdikhan	6	N/A	4	4	N/A	4	4
29 Murchomi Mezre	20	30	30	25-30	25	27	27
30 Najaran	25	25	30	30	30	15	15
31 Nbshi/Numshin	36	36	25	25-30	30	20	20
32 Nkhri	62	62	N/A	40-50	40	28	28
33 Nor Kiugh	21	N/A	25	25-30	25	18	18
34 Nor Kiugh Mezre	N/A	30	30	30	30	20	20
35 Norshnag	N/A	N/A	6	6	N/A	5	5
36 Okhi/Okhu	25	N/A	40	40-45	40	27	27
37 Palu	N/A	250	600	600	600	N/A	N/A
38 Sakrat/Sekerat	75	75	65	65-70	60	55	55
39 Sgham/Saghman	51	51	45	45-50	40	35	35
40 Shinaz	54	54	50	50-55	50	45	45
41 Surin	32	32	25	25	30	7	7
42 Tavti Mezre	10	10	25	25-30	25	20	20
43 Tepe	61	61	50	45-50	45	40	40
44 Til	24	24	35	35	35	25	25
45 Trkhe	32	32	60	60	60	44	44
46 Tset	87	87	100	80-90	80	70	70
47 Uzunoba	N/A	N/A	30	35	35	25	25
48 Uzunoba Mezre	N/A	12	10	10-15	15	6	6
Palu District Total	1,360	1,604	2,098	2,196-2,383	2,120	1,293	1,317